

HDIBC AGM, 12 APRIL 2024 REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP

The length of the membership list is clearly not the only measure of the club's health, but whether the list is growing or shrinking is an important indicator of success. In this respect the past year, and particularly the period since October, has been successful in continuing the trend towards growth that began in 2022/23.

The table below gives the numbers over the last five years, and shows the marked reduction following the pandemic in 2020, and the modest revival from the lowest point in 2022.

	Dec 2018	Nov 2019	Feb 2020	March 2022	March 2023	March 2024
Life Members	7	3	3	4	5	5
Other Playing Members	323	281	286	228	231	248
TOTAL	330	284	289	232	236	253
Social Members	24	14	14	12	6	7

Inevitably, especially given our age profile, the past year has seen approximately 30 members leave the club, but these losses have been more than compensated for by the addition of 46 new members, bringing the playing strength up to 253. Most of them have been new to indoor bowls, but with the encouragement of a well-organised introductory coaching programme they have become enthusiastic and skilful players. It is also worth noting that their average age on joining was below 68, significantly lower than for the club overall.

As to future years, there is a clear determination to continue the drive for attracting new players to join, and we should see further growth in the numbers.

A year ago, I decided that seven years as Membership Secretary was long enough, especially as I said in 2017 that I would do the job for a year! Succession planning has not always been the club's major strength, but in this case I am very pleased that David Kilvert has been willing to work with me this year – he has already taken on responsibility for allocating and managing the changing room lockers – and (provided his nomination is not opposed) he will become Membership Secretary at the AGM.

Mike Arnold

12/03/2024